

Papers of:  
Dean Acheson

Excerpt from a letter to a friend 12/3/62

My flight bearing the news of Cuba had a good many amusing as well as exciting moments. Some day I shall put them all down, but it would destroy my usefulness to do it now. As David walked with me from the command post of our SAC base to the car which was to run me back to our aircraft, he said, "Put your hand in my coat pocket." I did so, and felt a revolver. "Against whom?" I asked, "do you carry this artillery? Am I to be liquidated?" He did not know the potential enemy. "I was instructed to carry it" was all he would tell me. I am delighted that amidst all his duties he remembered my message to you.

DeGaulle could not have been better. He has a magnificent inner calm and serenity which makes all the nervous affectations of social talk unnecessary as well as any urge to make an impression or to charm. His dignity is real, like General Marshall's. We could not have had a more satisfactory talk. And as for der Alte, I always enjoy him and get on with him very well. He was here shortly afterward for an official visit which gave me another chance to see him.